[Mr. T. P. Ramasubba Aiyar.]

(*c*) No such instance has come to the notice of Government.

(*d*) The question of removing the present site of the bund will be examined by the Public Works Department.

Polling Officer at Kavumbhagam in the General Elections of 1925.

231. **MR. G. NARAYANA PILLAI** (*Tiruvalla*): (*a*) Are the Government aware of the complaints preferred against the Polling Officer at Kavumbhagam station in the Tiruvalla constituency during the time of the general elections for the Legislative Council in 1925?

(*b*) If so, will the Government be pleased to state if any enquiry has been held or report submitted by the Returning Officer in the matter of the complaints?

MR. T. P. RAMASUBBA AIYAR (*Secretary to Government*): (*a*) 2 days after the polling in the Kavumbhagam station was over, an unverified petition purporting to have been sent by one Paramesvaran Pillai Kesava Pillai of Mullelil Veedu was received by the Returning Officer by Anchal. It is alleged that the petitioner had asked the Presiding Officer at Kavumbhagam to mark his vote for a candidate on his ballot paper as his eyesight was defective and that the Presiding Officer at first put a mark against the name of another candidate, but on being informed of the wrong mark, he subsequently recorded the correct vote on another ballot paper, treating the first one as spoilt.

(*b*) The petitioner had not appeared in person; nor had he named his witnesses. The Returning Officer, however, called for the remarks of the Presiding Officer. On considering the latter's report and the result of such enquiry as was possible in the circumstances, the petition was recorded, after the counting was over.

MR. G. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Tiruvalla*): With reference to the answer to part (*b*), may I know if the Returning Officer sent any notice to the petitioner to appear before him or to name his witnesses?

MR. T. P. RAMASUBBA AIYAR (*Secretary to Government*): The Returning Officer is understood to have been at the spot on the day of the election. So it was open to the petitioner to appear before him or to produce his witnesses if he had any complaints.

MR. G. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Tiruvalla*): From part (*a*) it can be seen that he received a petition.

MR. T. P. RAMASUBBA AIYAR (*Secretary to Government*): Yes, it was after he returned to his head-quarters.

MR. G. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Tiruvalla*): After receipt of that from the petitioner, why did the Returning Officer not require the petitioner either to appear in person or to produce witnesses?

MR. T. P. RAMASUBBA AIYAR (*Secretary to Government*): That was not done for the reasons given in the answer. The petition had not been verified. In fact, the genuineness of the petition itself was doubted

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